

PHOSPHORUS

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Go Phosphorus Free

By Danielle Ritter

What is phosphorus?

A naturally-occurring nutrient that plants only use in small quantities for growth & energy storage.

Why is it a problem?

Excess phosphorus travels into rivers, streams, and lakes resulting in algal blooms and undesirable plant growth. Algae overgrowth turns water green and makes it unsustainable for many species due to the lack of food, oxygen, and viable habitats.

How does this apply to you?

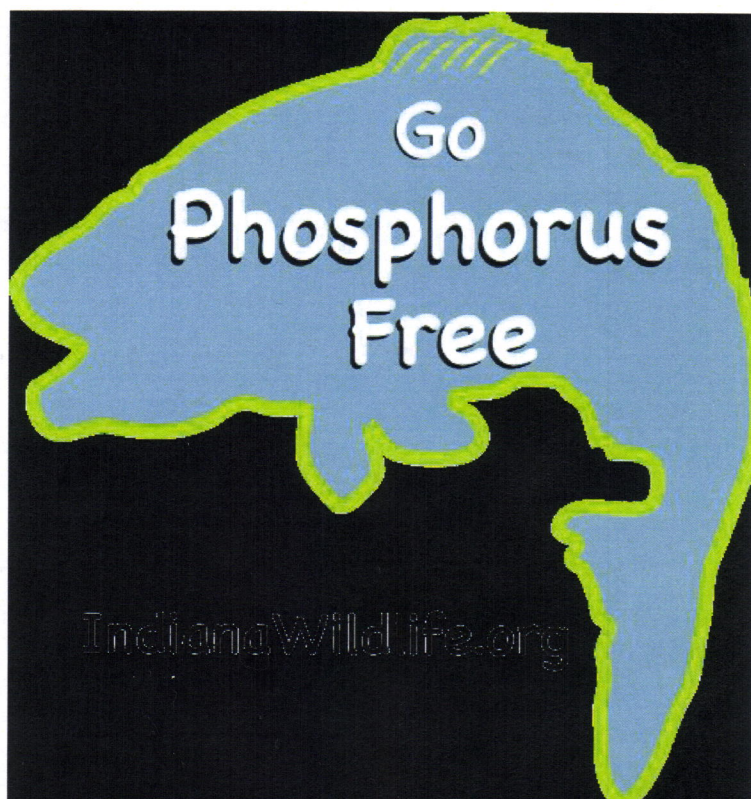
Quality of drinking water is affected, indicated by poor taste and smell. Some algae can produce toxins causing skin irritations. If consumed, this water can lead to gastrointestinal problems and damage to internal systems or even major organs. Harmful for pets, including livestock to consume contaminated water.

How can you help?

- Don't guess...Soil Test!
- Mow Grass High
Taller grass is stronger grass. Tall grass promotes root growth and shades out weeds. Let short clips fall back into the lawn. Clippings recycle nitrogen back into the soil, so fertilizer can be reduced by 25% or more.
- Sweep Up Fertilizer From Paved Surfaces
Fertilizer left on sidewalks and driveways can easily wash into storm drains, rivers, and lakes.
- The Right Time To Fertilize
If you have fertilized in the Fall, you will have a green lawn in the early Spring - and won't need to fertilize

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

What is phosphorus?	1
Why is it a problem?	1
How can you help?	1
Know Your Numbers	2
What to do before you fertilize?	2
Recommended Fertilizer Brands & Lawn Care Services	3

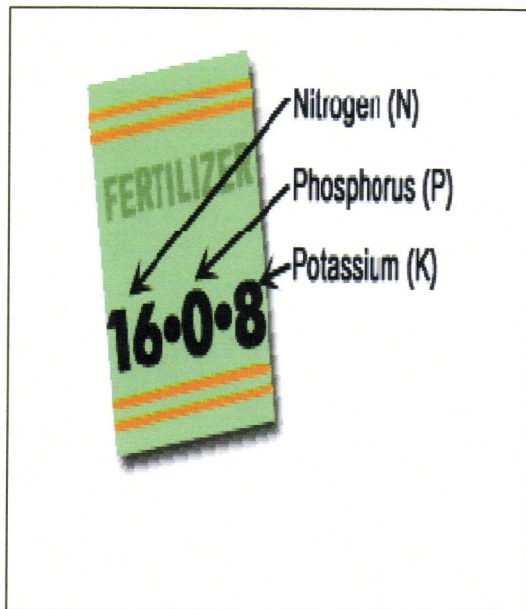


Know Your Numbers!

When buying lawn fertilizers, remember that each manufacturer makes several formulas. The only way to be sure your lawn fertilizer has no phosphates is to look at the middle number on the bag or box label. It should read zero, such as this:

10-0-10

A phosphorus free lawn is a happy lawn!



What to do before you fertilize?

- Numbers indicate the concentrations of three nutrients: nitrogen, phosphorus & potassium.
- Check the label on the fertilizer bag to make sure the middle number is zero.
- Don't fertilize before a rainstorm.

Don't over-fertilize your lawn. On average, 89% of Indiana lawns do not need phosphorus according to a 2004 survey by Purdue

<http://www.agry.purdue.edu/turf/report/2006/10.pdf>

Recommended Fertilizer Brands & Lawn Care Services

- Some brands to look for: Pennington, Sta-Green, Lesco, or Rebel.
- Other brands to look at: Aluminum Sulfate, Scotts Snap Pac, Kgro Premium, Scotts Turf Builder
- All these brands contain NO PHOSPHORUS.

Lawn Care Services

- TruGreen & NaturaLawn of America
- Any services you use remember to ask for **phosphorus free** fertilizer.

Remember When You Apply Fertilizer To Your Lawn, You Are Adding PHOSPHORUS To Our Lakes!

Phosphorus washes off fertilized lawns and is carried to our lakes via the storm drainage system. Phosphorus feeds algae and decreases water clarity, often turning lakes green. By using zero-phosphorus lawn fertilizer we'll reduce phosphorus inputs to our lakes, resulting in fewer algae problems and clearer water.

That's right, ordinary people, like us, can make a daily impact in reducing the amount of phosphate in our waters.

For More Information

MS4-Municipal Separated Storm Sewer System

http://www.laportecounty.org/departments/soilandwater/Storm_Sewer_System.html

Contact the Indiana Wildlife Federation

(www.indianawildlife.org), or read more at Indiana Department of Environmental Management (www.in.gov/idem/algae/)

Indiana Lakes Management Society
(<http://www.indianalakes.org/lawnCare.htm>)

Indiana Clean Lakes Program
(<http://www.indiana.edu/~clp/>)